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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SVC-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 SSC-01 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /085 W
----------081736 231215Z /44
R 230445Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9512
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 895

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

USEC BRUSSELS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PDIP, FR, LA
SUBJECT: LAO BREAK RELATIONS WITH FRANCE

REF: VIENTIANE 892

BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. SUMMARY: THE LAO NOTE TELLING THEFRENCH TO REMOVE ALL THEIR DIPLOMATS FROM LAOS MAINTAINS THAT THE ACTION IS BEING TAKEN AS A RESULT OF THE LAO DECISION TO REMOVE THEIR DIPLOMATS FROM PARIS. THE FRENCH ARE CHARGED WITH PROPAGANDIZING AGAINST THE LPDR, WITH HELPING LAO INTELLECTUALS AND TECHNICIANS TO FLEE, AND WITH SUPPORTING SUBVERSION. FRENCH EMBASSY PERSONNEL PLAN TO LEAVE AUGUST 28. THE WORDING OF THE NOTE AND THE AUTHORIZATION OF EMBASSY "GUARDS" IN VIENTIANE AND PARIS SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT THE LAO ARE TRYING TO AVOID SAYING CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS HAVE BEEN FORMALLY BROKEN. END SUMMARY. END CONFIDENTIAL.

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. THE AUGUST 22 ISSUE OF THE LAO GOVERNMENT'S FRENCH LANGUAGE NEWS SHEET AND THE AUGUST 23 ISSUES OF THE LOCAL LAO LANGUAGE PAPERS CARRY THE TEXT OF THE FOLLOWING NOTE WHICH LAO MFA

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DEPARTMENT TWO DIRECTOR SOMBAT CHOUNLAMANY GAVE FRENCH CHARGE SCHLUMBERGER AUGUST 21 (REFTEL:

A. (COMPLIMENTARY OPENING) "THE GOVERNMENT OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC HAS RECENTLY NOTED WITH REGRET THE INTENSIFICATION OF ACTIONS BY THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES DESIGNED TO CAUSE THE DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN FRANCE AND LAOS. FOR ITS PART, THE LAO GOVERNMENT HAS FOR ALMOST THREE YEARS MADE EVERY EFFORT TO IMPROVE THEM.

B. "IN SPITE OF THIS, FRANCE HAS STUBBORNLY PURSUED A VIOLENTLY HOSTILE POLICY TOWARD THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC EVER SINCE ITS FORMATION, A POLICY CONSISTING OF LOOKING FAVORABLY ON DEROGATORY PROPAGANDA AGAINST THE NEW LAO REGIME, OF ENCOURAGING AND ASSISTING THE FLIGHT OF YOUNG LAO INTELLECTUALS AND TECHNICIANS, ETC., AND ESPECIALLY OF SURREPTITIOUSLY SUPPORTING AS MUCH IN A MORAL AS IN A MATERIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SENSE LAO TRAITORS IN THEIR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED FROM FRANCE AND EVEN INSIDE LAO TERRITORY.

C. "THE FACTS ARE TOO NUMEROUS, AND IT IS TIRESOME TO LIST THEM HERE, SINCE THEY HAVE ALREADY ON MANY OCCASIONS BEEN BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT BY THE LAO GOVERNMENT WITH IMMEDIATE BUT VAIN REQUESTS THAT THEY BE ENDED.

D. "FACED WITH THIS POINTLESS AND OBSTINATE ATTITUDE

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OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, THE LAO GOVERNMENT, AT THE END OF ITS PATIENCE IN ITS EFFORTS TO SEEK THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, NOW SEES ITSELF REQUIRED TO TAKE ADEQUATE MEASURES IN ORDER TO PROTECT ITS LEGITIMATE NATIONAL INTEREST. IT IS THUS DECIDING TO RECALL ALL ITS DIPLOMATS AND OFFICIALS FROM ITS EMBASSY IN PARIS, EXCEPT FOR A SINGLE NON-DIPLOMATIC OFFICIAL WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR GUARDING THE EMBASSY.

E. "AS A RESULT, FOLLOWING THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY AND RECIPROCITY IN RELATIONS BETWEEN SOVEREIGN STATES, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE LAO PEOPLE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

REQUESTS THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT RECALL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ALL ITS DIPLOMATS AND OFFICIALS EXCEPT FOR A SINGLE NON-DIPLOMATIC OFFICIAL WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR GUARDING THE EMBASSY.

F. "THE GOVERNMENT OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC AGAIN REITERATES THE POSITION AND THE HOPE OF THE LAO PEOPLE ALWAYS TO MAINTAIN FRIENDLY AND TRADITIONAL RELATIONS WITH THE FRENCH PEOPLE." (COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE.) END UNCLASSIFIED.

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2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. SCHLUMBERGER TOLD US THAT SOMBAT SEEMED NERVOUS WHEN HE HANDED OVER THE NOTE AND MADE NO ORAL COMMENTS. SCHLUMBERGER PLANS TO LEAVE IN A GROUP OF FRENCH EMBASSY VEHICLES VIA THE THA NALENG FERRY CROSSING ON MONDAY, AUGUST 28. HE HOPES TO BE ABLE TO TAKE AS MUCH PERSONAL AND OFFICIAL EFFECTS WITH HIM AS POSSIBLE. HE SAID THAT THE QUAI D'ORSAY HAD NOT YET TOLD HIM WHETHER IT HAD BEEN DECIDED TO LEAVE A FRENCH OFFICIAL BEHIND AS AN EMBASSY GUARD.

3. COMMENT: THE WORDING OF THE LAO NOTE AND THE AUTHORIZATION OF "GUARDS" IN VIENTIANE AND PARIS SEEM TO INDICATED THAT THE LAO WANT TO AVOID SAYING THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS HAVE BEEN FORMALLY BROKEN.
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ROBERTS

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